JUSTICE LEAGUE TASK FORCE

2
JUL 93

JUSTICE LEAGUE® TASK FORCE™

MICHELINIE, VELLUTO & ALBRECHT

TARGETED FOR DEATH!

STOP

Sal Velluto '93

SPLIT HIT

NEW YORK; A HIGHLY SECURED BUILDING ON THE LOWER EAST SIDE.

Y-YOU MEAN, THOSE PILES OF... OF SMOLDERING GOOP...

...USED TO BE COWS?!

THAT REMINDS ME--CAN WE SEND OUT FOR BURGERS?

I'M STARVED!

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GEEZ, FLASH, THAT'S DISGUSTING!
C'MON, GYPSY, I HAVE A HIGH METABOLISM, GOTTA EAT A LOT!
SUE ME!
MERCIFUL PROVIDENCE!
MR. WEST, IN LIGHT OF YOUR PAST EXPERIENCES WITH THE GOVERNMENT-- THE *INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE* IN PARTICULAR--
--I'M SURE A LAWSUIT COULD BE *ARRANGED!*
WOULD YOU CARE TO PURSUE THE TOPIC FURTHER?
Uhhhhh...
...NOPE.
GOOD. THEN I'LL REPEAT: THE *SLAUGHTER* SHOWN IN THOSE OTHER SATELLITE PHOTOS WAS THE RESULT OF *THIS* MACHINE--
--A CANNON CAPABLE OF *BROADCASTING* POWERFUL DEATH WAVES!
THE UNITED NATIONS *AUTHORIZED ME TO FORM THIS ONE-TIME TASK FORCE TO *DESTROY* THAT INFERNAL DEVICE!
IT'S CURRENTLY IN THE HANDS OF REVOLUTIONARIES ON THE CARIBBEAN ISLAND OF *SANOBEL*.
THEY INTEND USING IT TO DEPOSE THAT NATION'S CURRENT PRESIDENT, *ENRIQUE RAMOS*.
SANOBEL IS VITAL TO AMERICAN INTERESTS IN THE AREA.
AND SINCE VICTORIOUS REBELS MIGHT CHOOSE TO *ALTER* ALLIANCES...
2
DIDN'T I READ IN SCHOOL THAT RAMOS WAS A *DICTATOR?*
ONE OF THE WORST. HIS OPPOSITION USUALLY ENDS UP IN *PIECES!*
IT'S A CHOICE BETWEEN EVILS. BUT, TECHNICALLY--
--WE'RE NOT BEING ASKED TO *HELP* RAMOS, ONLY TO *HINDER* HIS ENEMIES!
IF THAT CANNON FALLS INTO THE WRONG HANDS--
--WHOLE *POPULATIONS* COULD BE MASSACRED FROM AFAR!
LIFE'S FULL OF TOUGH CHOICES. ON THIS ONE, I HAVE TO SIDE WITH AQUAMAN.
THERE *SHOULD* BE ANOTHER WAY, BUT--ALL RIGHT. I'LL GO ALONG.
NIGHTWING?
YEAH. OKAY. COUNT ME IN.
3

HOW REFRESHINGLY INTELLIGENT!

VERY WELL, THE NEXT FEW HOURS ARE YOURS TO... Ah... DO WHATEVER YOU COSTUMED PEOPLE DO!

J'ONN J'ONZZ AND I WILL MAP OUT YOUR ASSAULT STRATEGY.

A FEW HOURS IS JUST ENOUGH FOR A REALLY GOOD SHOWER!

Uh... HAVE FUN!

A FEW HOURS? FUN? SOUNDS LIKE A WINNING COMBINATION, GYP! HOW 'BOUT WE START WITH SOMETHING TO EAT?

I HEAR "THE RIB TROUGH" HAS AN ALL-YOU-CAN-GRAZE BUFFET!

GOOD FOOD AND GOOD COMPANY DOES SOUND GREAT, WALLY!

TELL YOU WHAT--

--WHY DON'T WE DISCUSS IT WHEN NIGHTWING AND I GET BACK FROM DINNER?

HUH...?

SANOBEL ISLAND--

--WHERE A CALM, CARIBBEAN DUSK SETTLES OVER THE PLUSH SEASIDE COMPOUND OF MIGUEL PIRO...

...A SURPRISING NEW HOST TO THE FORCES OF FREEDOM!

YOU AND YOUR MEN ARE MOST WELCOME HERE, CAPITÃN SIERRA. CONSIDER MY HOME TO BE YOURS!

NOW IF YOU WILL EXCUSE ME? I HAVE SOME MATTERS OF COMMERCE TO ATTEND TO. BUENOS TARDES.

HE SEEMS CORDIAL ENOUGH, RAFAEL.

ST, HERMANITO-- THE DEVIL IS OFTEN CHARMING!

RAFE--!

AM I SUPPOSED TO *FORGET* THE *COCAINE* PIRO TRAFFICS? THE PAIN AND SUFFERING THAT HAVE *PAID* FOR THIS FORTRESS?

BUT WE *NEED* HIM!

SI, SI, I KNOW!

OUR WEAPON REQUIRES *ENERGY*. AND WHEN *RAMOS* DISCOVERED WE WERE TAPPING ELECTRICAL CABLES RUNNING FROM THE CAPITAL, HE SHUT OFF ALL POWER BEYOND ITS BORDERS!

PIRO'S PRIVATE *GENERATORS* OFFER THE ONLY HOPE FOR OUR PLAN TO CONTINUE! BUT...

...AT WHAT *COST*, PABLO?

PIRO DEMANDS *IMMUNITY* WHEN OUR PEOPLE COME TO POWER! AND BY CONDONING HIS CRIMES, ARE WE NOT AS BAD AS THE *MAN* WE SEEK TO *VANQUISH*?

THINK OF THE *CAUSE*, BROTHER! *THAT* IS WHAT MATTERS!

WE WERE JUST LUCKY THAT *COUNT GLASS* REMEMBERED THIS PLACE BEFORE HE LEFT FOR ENGLAND--

"--ON IMPORTANT BUSINESS!"
BOORISH LOUT!
A ROUND ON JEREMY GLASS, ME DARLIN'S! BUBBLY FER EVER'ONE!
I HEAR HE BOUGHT HIS INVITATION!
THIS HERE'S THE SOCIAL EVENT O' THE SEASON, DUCKY!
SO HOW'S ABOUT WE DO A LITTLE PERSONAL CELEBRATIN'?
LET GO!
HEY--!
I'M SORRY, MR. GLASS, BUT YOUR BEHAVIOR IS UNACCEPTABLE.
I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO LEAVE.
NO ONE TOUCHES THE COUNT!
KLOK
MY GAWD! W-WAS THAT ACTUALLY :GULP: V-V-VIOLENCE?
THANKS, JOHANN--FER EARNIN' YER PAY, THAT IS!
WHO NEEDS THE LIKES O' THEM ANYHOW! ALWAYS THINKIN' THEY'RE BETTER'N EVER'ONE!
WE'LL JUST SEE WHO'S BETTER!
BLUE-BLOODED SWINE!
DON'T WORRY, COUNT, I'LL DRIVE YA RIGHT TO YOUR PLANE. WE CAN BE BACK ON SANOBEL BY--
7

MORNING.

SORRY, HANNIBAL. NO WORD FROM THE STRIKE TEAM YET.

BLAST! CONTINUE MONITORING, MARIETTA. AND WHILE WE WAIT, YOU MIGHT START DRAFTING OUR FINAL REPORT.

I WANT IT READY TO TURN IN THE *INSTANT* THIS UNPLEASANTNESS IS OVER!

I *STILL* CAN'T BELIEVE HOW THEY RAILROADED ME INTO THIS SORDID *TASK FORCE* AFFAIR! I WAS *SURE* I WAS ABOUT TO RECEIVE THE FRENCH AMBASSADORSHIP! MY DREAM, MY LIFE-LONG GOAL...

...NIRVANA!

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TRUE, THE FRENCH *CAN* BE A BIT SURLY--

--BUT THEIR *CUISINE* IS THE FINEST ON EARTH!

SPEAKING OF WHICH...LATE *AGAIN*, I SEE!

DRAT!

OH, WELL, AT LEAST I'LL GIVE THE STATE DEPARTMENT A SPARKLING *VICTORY!* WITH A PLUM LIKE *THAT* ON MY RECORD, THEY'LL *HAVE* TO AWARD ME THAT AMBAS-SADOR--

NOK NOK

--HA! IT'S ABOUT TIME!

COME IN!

GOOD "AFTERNOON," MY DEAR! TAKE THE LONG WAY AROUND, DID WE?

THROUGH *BANGLADESH*?!

I'M ABSOLUTELY STARVED! I COULD EAT AN ENTIRE--

--EEP!

YOUR PRESCRIPTION BREAKFAST, MR. MARTIN.

OH, YES. WELL, THEN...DOWN THE HATCH!

MMMMMM. FETHERINGTON PATÉ, ON A FLUFFED EGG BISKETTE!

EXQUISITE!

AND, MY, THAT *PARSLEY* LOOKS RATHER YUMMY AS WELL--!

SORRY, SIR.

DOCTOR'S ORDERS!

A *CURSE* ON DOCTOR MATHERS! *AND* ON THE GLANDULAR CONDITION THAT KEEPS *ME A SLAVE* TO THAT CALORIE-COUNTING QUACK!

DAMMIT, MARI, STILL NO WORD?

'FRAID NOT, HANNIBAL.

THOSE SUPER-POWERED BUFFOONS COULDN'T FIND THEIR HIP POCKETS WITH *BOTH HANDS*! SURELY THEY MUST HAVE REACHED--

"--THAT CLEARING BY NOW!"

SANOBEL ISLAND.

SANOBEL ISLAND 1.6 SECONDS LATER!

WHSSHHH

SSHHH

SHH

OKAY, IT'S CLEAN! MOVE IN!

GONE? BUT THEY *WERE* HERE!

THAT'S RIGHT, SIR. NOT A TRACE.

THEN HERE'S YOUR NEXT STEP:

UH-HUH. THESE *CABLES* ARE WHAT THEY HAD THAT CANNON HOOKED UP TO IN THE PHOTOS!

GUESS YOU'D BETTER GIVE MARTIN THE SCOOP, J'ONN.

YELLUTO-ALBRECHT 3-93

10

THERE ARE ONLY TWO LOCAL SOURCES CAPABLE OF SUPPLYING ENOUGH *ENERGY* FOR THAT WEAPON.

THE NATIONAL POWER STATION ADJACENT TO THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE IN THE CAPITAL, AND A PRIVATE ESTATE ON THE SOUTHWEST COAST.

YOU'LL HAVE TO CHECK *BOTH* OUT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE--WHICH MEANS *SPLITTING* YOUR FORCE INTO TWO TEAMS!

11

OKAY, AQUAMAN'S OBVIOUS FOR THE COASTAL STRIKE!

AND SINCE MARTIAN MANHUNTER'S THE STRONGEST--

--HE SHOULD HEAD THE RAID ON THE CAPITAL WHILE--

THIS ISN'T THE TITANS, NIGHTWING!

YOU'RE A MEMBER HERE--NOT A LEADER! TRY TO KEEP THAT IN MIND!

Oh. SURE. GOTCHA.

MR. MARTIN? I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA OF DIVIDING OUR FORCE.

AND I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA OF PAYING TAXES--

--BUT THERE ARE SOME IRRITATIONS EVEN "PREPARATION H" CAN'T ELIMINATE!

YOU HAVE YOUR ORDERS--I SUGGEST YOU FOLLOW THEM!

KLIK

WHILE ON THE SOUTH-WEST COAST...

SEÑOR COUNT! WELCOME BACK!

HOW WAS YOUR TRIP?

WASTE O' TIME-- HOBNOBBIN' WITH A BUNCH O' NOBODIES!

I FIGGERED I'D DO MORE GOOD HERE. HOW'S OUR BOY?

RAFAEL SIERRA IS A TROUBLED MAN, *MI AMIGO*. HE SEEMS TO BE HAVING A CRISIS OF CONSCIENCE.

YEAH? HOW... *UNFORTUNATE!*

CATCH YA LATER, MIKE!

'EY, PABLO! *BWAYNUS DEECE!* THAT ARM GETTIN' BETTER?

SI, COUNT GLASS. I JUST WISH I COULD SAY THE SAME FOR MY *BROTHER!*

RAFE HAS MADE HIS DECISION: HE INTENDS TO USE YOUR *DEATH PROJECTOR* ON THE GOVERNMENTAL PALACE!

BUT SINCE THE MACHINE CANNOT BE AIMED PRECISELY, IT WILL LIKELY KILL CIVILIANS ALONG WITH RAMOS AND HIS HENCHMEN!

IT TEARS RAFE APART TO COMPROMISE HIS IDEALS LIKE THIS, TO SACRIFICE INNOCENTS TO DESTROY TYRANNY...

...TO ALLOW ENDS TO JUSTIFY MEANS!

LISTEN, MATE, THERE MAY BE A WAY TO SAVE THE POOR LAD A LOTTA PAIN!

PSS-PSST PSSST

A BOLD PLAN, COUNT-- AND DANGEROUS! BUT WORTH THE RISK IF IT WORKS!

GRACIAS!

DON'T THANK ME, BOY!

IF THINGS WORK THE WAY I WANT 'EM TO, IT'LL CHOP THAT SELF-RIGHTEOUS BROTHER O' YOURS OFF AT THE KNEES!

THAT'S THE REAL REASON I'M DOIN' ALL THIS!

IT'S WHAT LIFE'S ABOUT, CUTTIN' FOLKS LIKE 'IM DOWN A FEW PEGS, PEELIN' THEIR SOULS AN' SHOWIN' 'EM THEY REALLY AIN'T NO BETTER'N ME--ER ANYONE ELSE!

HOURS LATER, OUTSIDE THE PIRO COMPOUND...

I'LL HAVE THIS SECURITY SYSTEM NEGGED IN HALF A SEC!

ENTRADA DE SERVICIO

TELL AQUAMAN TO GET READY!

J'ONN? PROBLEM?

NO.

WHAT'S THAT OLD EARTH SAYING? SOMETHING ABOUT "TOO MANY CHIEFS"...?

AQUAMAN! NIGHTWING SAYS THE LASER GRID ACROSS THE ENTRANCE TO THE SWIMMING GROTTO SHOULD BE CANCELLED SOON!

PREPARE FOR ASSAULT!

THAT SHOULD DO IT!

LET'S GO!

GROTTO PASSAGE CLEAR!

Eh? WHAT'S WITH THE WIND? IT STOPPED FOR A SECOND, AS IF SOMETHING BLOCKED IT!

LOCO WEATHER!

THANKS FOR THE DISTRACTION, J'ONN!

THE GOVERNMENT PALACE...

...WHERE A CALM AFTERNOON...

...SUDDENLY ISN'T!

Eh?

VOOOSH

WHAT'S WITH THE WIND? I'VE NEVER SEEN IT GUST LIKE THAT!

LOCO WEATHER!

THANKS FOR THE DISTRACTION, FLASH!

WHILE ELSEWHERE...

THE MACHINE IS READY, CAPITAN. BUT, IF YOU WISH TO RECONSIDER...?

DO IT, RICARDO.

WE MAKE OUR CHOICES, AND THEN WE LIVE WITH THEM.

DO IT.

INSIDE THE GOVERNMENT PALACE.

I'D BETTER CONTACT FLASH AND--WAIT! SOME KIND OF COMMOTION IN THE COURTYARD!

A LOYALIST ALERTED US THAT YOU WERE COMING! NOW--

--YOU WILL BE THE ONE TO DIE TODAY!

ONE THING'S FOR SURE--THAT DEATH CANNON ISN'T *HERE!*

PUERCO! YOUR ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT FAILED!

COUNT GLASS THOUGHT THAT IF I KILLED RAMOS, IT WOULD EASE RAFE'S BURDEN! BUT THERE MUST BE A *TRAITOR* IN OUR CAMP!

I'M SORRY, MY BROTHER... I'VE FAILED!

MIGUEL PIRO'S ESTATE.

QUE--?

?!?

OKAY, I'M IN!

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE--

--OTHERS?

AQUAMAN! C'MON! J'ONN SAYS THEY'RE ABOUT TO BRING THE DEATH CANNON *ON LINE!*

I'D HOPED THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE WOULD GET US FARTHER, BUT WE CAN'T AFFORD SUBTLETY NOW!

WE HAVE TO STOP THEM FROM USING THAT MACHINE!

F-F-FLYING MEN?!

RAFAEL! WE'RE UNDER *ATTACK!*

JUSTICE LEAGUE WANTED--

--BATMAN FOR THIS GIG!

GOTTA PROVE I'M NO *SECOND STRINGER!*

H-HE BENDS STEEL IN HIS BARE HANDS! THEN IT'S TRUE--*SUPERMAN* IS ALIVE!

A-AND GULP GREEN?!

PIRO SAID NOTHING OF FIGHTING *GODS* WHEN HE HIRED US!

THEY'RE *NOT* GODS! YOU SHOOT THEM, THEY *DIE!*

OF COURSE, *HITTING* THEM COULD BE A PROBLEM...!

JOHANN! *DO* SOMETHIN'! WHAT BLOODY GOOD ARE YA?

MY BLITZ ARMOR'S IN THE MANSION! BUT I *HAVE* TO PROTECT THE COUNT!

HE GAVE ME ALL I HAVE! IF I NEED TO DIE FOR HIM, I WILL!

KRAK KRAK

WHOA!

INFERNO! I OWED GLASS A FAVOR, SI! BUT HE'S TURNING MY HOME INTO A BATTLEFIELD!

DON'T KNOW HOW RAMOS GOT THESE COSTUMED WARRIORS ON HIS SIDE, BUT IF I STILL HAD OPTIONS BEFORE--

--I DON'T HAVE ANY NOW!

SYSTEM ENGAGED
DANGER

TIK

VRRRRRRMMM

AGH! F-FEEL LIKE... I'M BEING PULLED APART! OH, LORD!

D-DEATH CANNON... MUST BE FOCUSED...ON THIS BUILDING!

WHAT RAFAEL SAID...WAS TRUE! VIOLENT ENERGY... PULSING THROUGH ME!

GROWING STRONGER... THE CLOSER I GET! HAVE TO HOPE...MY MARTIAN METABOLISM...WILL PROTECT ME... FROM...

...DAMN.

LEGS...! C-CAN'T FEEL...MY LEGS!

I'M NOT... G-GOING TO... MAKE IT...!

GYPSY! YOU OKAY?

GYPSY!

MANHUNTER'S DOWN!

WE HAVE TO GET HIM AWAY FROM THAT MACHINE!

BUT IF WE GET TOO CLOSE, WE'LL TAKE DAMAGE, TOO!

LET ME TRY SOMETHING!

YOU KEEP THE GUERRILLAS OFF OUR BACKS!

TAKE IT EASY, GYP!

NO! G-GOT TO... WARN THEM!

J'ONN? THIS IS GYPSY!

CAN YOU HEAR ME? YOU HAVE TO SHUT THAT CANNON OFF!

I HEARD THEM CALL HIM... "SIERRA"!

SOLDIERS JUST BROUGHT A FREEDOM FIGHTER INTO THE PALACE! I THINK HE MIGHT BE IMPORTANT!

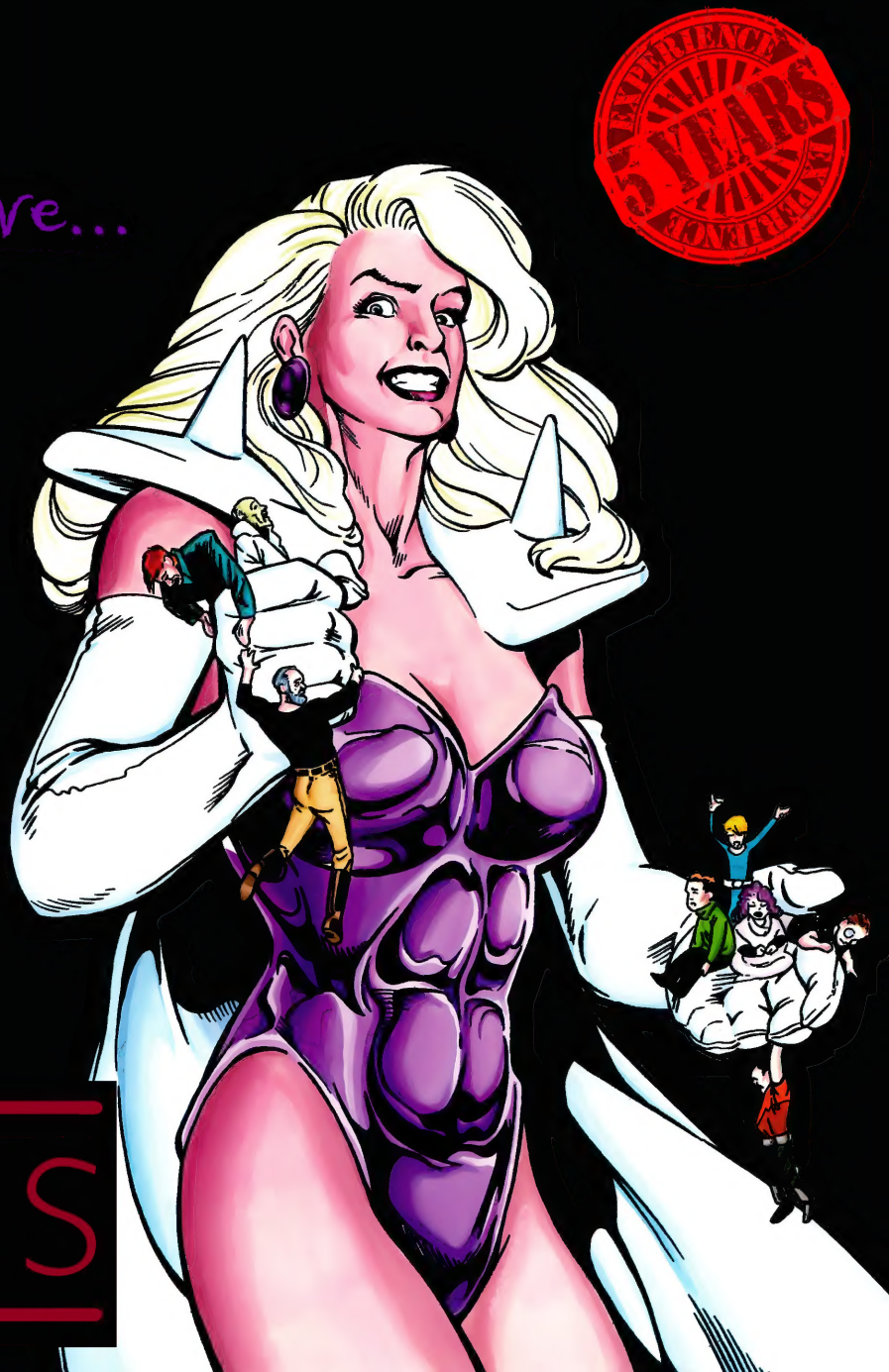
SIER-- PABLO?! MADRE DE DIOS!

YA MEAN, YA'VE GONE AN' KILT YER OWN BROTHER?! OOPS!

THAT ANONYMOUS CALL TO RAMOS WORKED LIKE A CHARM! RAFE, ME LAD... YER THROUGH!

TO BE CONTINUED!

From Baaldur, with love...



GLORITH

novus